Daniel Cox

EDU 221 Block 1

F.I.A.E. Chapter 8

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Chapter 8 attempts to cover the issue of why we grade, while also considering other factors such as attendance, behavior, and effort. The chapter utilizes a statement from a teacher that is torn by having students miss almost half of the school year; yet still managed to pass the grade with can you fail a student just because they do not make an appearance at the school but can master the topics. The book lists six reasons for why they grade, outside of the because we have to. They include document student and teacher progress, feedback to student, parent, and teacher, inform instructional decisions, motivate students, punish students, and sort students. The first three rationale for grading are positive in scope and provide a legitimate tool for students to utilize and grow from. The last three are all negative in connotation and will not provide the student with any useful, motivational influence, as the text points out, the low grades will not motivate a student to work harder, but rather further alienate the student. The pitfall to grading participation, as described by the chapter, is if the participation is a technique used to learn the standards. If the participation is the skill that is being taught, then it is appropriate to grade as it will demonstrate mastery. The exception to this is example is the student that has social struggles and is frequently suspended, he is an active participant in class, always knows what is going on and very enjoyable in class. The final section covers effort and behavior. The most difficult aspect of this grading performance is there is no nonsubjective method for truly measuring effort.

This chapter builds on the chapter 7 when dealing with grading but adding the contentious subject of effort, attendance, and behavior. The syllabi that have accompanied the courses that I have taken during my collegiate education have all included a participation/attendance portion. It is through this are that most students can add easy points toward their grade. Due to the complex nature of grading participation there needs to be clear definition of expectations as part of the effort and attendance. Students who do achieve the points available for participation should impact the class in positive ways and demonstrate a general knowledge of the subject material. No matter if we, as educators, make the decision to include participation or not as a function of the final grade; we will still be making conscious decisions on a daily basis regarding our students and how they act in our classrooms.